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Review of Criminal Justice Programs

A Report to the
Massachusetts Board of Higher Education

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Criminal Justice Review Committee

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Review of Criminal Justice Programs

A Report to the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education

I. Introduction and Background

On November 27, 2000, The Massachusetts Board of Higher Education commissioned a review of criminal justice degree programs in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Board's decision to undertake a statewide review of criminal justice programs was prompted by two primary factors: the increasing number of institutions seeking authority to offer criminal justice degree programs in the Commonwealth, and concerns raised in the local media regarding the quality and standards of criminal justice programs. The escalating costs to Massachusetts cities and towns of the Police Career Incentive Pay Program (Quinn Bill)¹ added to these concerns. The Police Career Incentive Pay Program, established by the Quinn Bill in 1970, authorizes pay increases to the base salaries of police officers for degrees in criminal justice or a degree in law earned at institutions accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) or licensed by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education.

Statewide review of academic degree programs by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education is not unprecedented. The Board undertook a review of information technology programs in the public sector in 1999 and of chemistry and physics programs in the state colleges in 1998. In the 1980's, the Board of Regents invited independent institutions to participate in reviews of computer science, nursing, teacher education, and engineering programs. This review is distinctive, however, in that it includes public and independent institutions in the Commonwealth as well as in three contiguous states and encompasses programs at the associate, bachelor, and master's degree levels.

The Review Committee was pleased to be asked to work with the Commonwealth on this major project. It knows of no other state that has undertaken such an extensive initiative to assess and improve the quality of criminal justice education at the postsecondary level. This review is particularly timely because of the rapid growth and evolution of the field of criminal justice over the past thirty years. As with any new academic field, especially one that is interdisciplinary in nature, criminal justice has and continues to face the challenges of defining standards of quality while providing flexibility so that programs can be both responsive to changes in their environments and innovative in their pedagogy. An important outcome of this process will be if it encourages improved communication and collaboration among criminal justice program faculty in both sectors and at all degree levels throughout the Commonwealth and in contiguous states.

The Committee wishes to acknowledge the time and attention that went into the preparation of materials by participating institutions. As faculty members from across the country, we understand the challenges and time commitment involved in preparing and submitting materials for external review, especially at relatively short notice. Although the role of the Board of Higher Education in relation to public higher education in the Commonwealth is clear, the relationship between the Board and independent colleges and universities varies according to a number of factors, including the date of an institution's charter. As such, participation was voluntary for independent and out-of-state institutions. Those institutions that chose to participate are to be commended.

¹ The full text of the Quinn Bill can be found in Appendix A.

By its very nature, a review that does not include on-site visits presents challenges to reviewers and to institutions. Data cannot be independently verified and incomplete data cannot be supplemented. Rather than drawing final conclusions based solely on the observations presented in this report, the Review Committee recommends to the Chancellor of Higher Education and to the campuses that this review and report be considered as a necessary and appropriate first step in assessing and improving criminal justice education in the Commonwealth. It is in this context that the Committee has prepared and submitted its report.

The Review Committee

The Board of Higher Education staff selected a team of 18 criminal justice professionals from across the United States to conduct this review. A majority of the program reviewers are or have served as department chairs or program heads of criminal justice programs. Three of the reviewers served at independent colleges and universities, and ten were from public college and universities; two were from community college programs, and two were from government agencies (one Federal, and one county justice agency). The reviewers included several members of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS), the largest scholarly association in the field of criminal justice. There is no national accrediting agency for criminal justice education programs. Below are the names of members of the Review Team and their institutional affiliation. The term *convener* after a reviewer's name connotes the assumption of additional responsibilities in facilitating the review process and in assisting the Chair with formulating the final report.

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Charge to the Committee

The Board's Charge to the Review Committee stated that the primary purposes of the review were to determine:

1. The quality and effectiveness of criminal justice programs offered by both public and independent institutions in Massachusetts as well as those programs in neighboring states that offer programs under the Police Career Incentive Pay Program;
2. whether state workforce needs and standards are being met; and
3. the current impact of the Police Career Incentive Pay Program on the quality and delivery of criminal justice programs in Massachusetts and surrounding states.

In its charge from the Board, the Committee was asked to review and evaluate the criminal justice programs at all participating institutions using the documents submitted by each institution. It was asked to assess program standards of quality, giving consideration to the breadth, depth, currency, and rigor of the curriculum; program effectiveness; strength of the faculty; adequacy of resources, facilities, and equipment; enrollment; and the level of responsiveness to industry and state needs. The Committee was asked to identify any institution that warranted further review because of questions related to program quality and to identify specific concerns. The charge stated that the programs identified would be asked to undergo a more intensive on-site review by a visiting committee in 2002. The Committee believes that its findings and recommendations are consistent with the Board's charge that envisioned a "paper review" as the first phase of the review process.

Participating Institutions

All institutions currently listed under the Police Career Incentive Pay Program (PCIPP) were invited by the Chancellor of Higher Education to participate in the review. Institutions are eligible to participate under the PCIPP if they offer law enforcement, criminal justice, or law degrees and are either approved by the Board of Higher Education or accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). Participation was compulsory only for the Massachusetts public higher education institutions that come under the authority of the Board.

Of the nineteen Massachusetts independent institutions on the PCIPP List, fourteen responded positively to the Chancellor's invitation to participate. Six of the thirteen out-of-state programs responded positively. In total, 43 institutions offering 58 programs participated in the review. A complete listing of invited and participating institutions and programs offered is located in Appendix B.

Segment	
Massachusetts Public Institutions	23
Massachusetts Independent Institutions	14
Out-of-State Institutions	6
<i>Total Institutions Represented</i>	43

Program Level	
Associate	22
Baccalaureate	27
Master's	9
<i>Total Programs Reviewed</i>	58

II. The Review Process

An Overview

The initial phase of the review of criminal justice programs comprised four main steps:

- The submission of materials by each participating institution
- The review of those materials by review committee members
- The discussion of findings at a two-day meeting of the Review Committee as a whole
- The preparation of a report to the Chancellor of the Board of Higher Education

The review of the 58 criminal justice programs was based on information prepared and submitted by each institution. To provide a meaningful and consistent structure and set of information on which to base the Committee's review, staff of the Board of Higher Education, in consultation with participating institutions, developed a set of submission guidelines to which all institutions were asked to respond. These guidelines sought detailed information on the following elements of criminal justice degree programs.

- **Mission, structure and curriculum** - including program goals, degree requirements, student evaluation protocols, program delivery arrangements, and articulation of students between programs.
- **Enrollment and students** - including admission requirements; policies on transfer credit, credit for life experience, and police academy training; retention and graduation rates; grade distributions; composition of the student body; and employment opportunities for program graduates.
- **Faculty** - including information on the number and percent-of-effort of program faculty, academic qualifications and expertise, teaching methods, scholarship, and the program's academic personnel policies.
- **Program Quality and Effectiveness** - including information on program administration, assessment and quality assurance.
- **Facilities and Resources** - including budgetary information, and information on facilities, equipment, and information technology resources available to faculty and students.

Additional documentation requested included copies of criminal justice course syllabi, vitae of faculty teaching in the program, copies of final examinations for each course, and other supplementary materials. The guidelines specifically requested that institutions address distinctions between programs offered through Day Divisions and Divisions of Continuing Education including programs offered at satellite site locations.

The Review Committee Meeting

When the Review Committee convened in Boston, Massachusetts on August 24-25, 2001, reviewers met to discuss their observations of each program. Prior to their arrival in Boston, each reviewer was sent the documents completed by the participating institutions to which they had been assigned. Each program was reviewed by at least two reviewers. The purpose of the August meeting was to complete the review of individual programs, develop a summary of findings, and compose pertinent recommendations to the Board.

The meeting began with an overview of the review process by Board of Higher Education staff, and a plenary discussion of criminal justice education, the Police Career Incentive Payment Program, and other concerns. Staff of the Board of Higher Education briefed the reviewers on the organization of higher education in Massachusetts, enrollment patterns, degrees awarded by level and institution for the period 1995-2000, and employment projections for the Commonwealth for the period 1998-2008. It is important to note that the Review Committee chose to expend the major part of its time working collaboratively to evaluate the materials provided by the institutions. The Committee is hopeful that campuses will find the observations and recommendations found in this report to be balanced, accurate and helpful.

Criteria for Review of Criminal Justice Programs

To facilitate the review process and provide a consistent foundation for evaluation, review criteria were informed by the standards of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. All institutions with criminal justice programs listed under the Police Career Incentive Pay Program must be approved either by the Board of Higher Education or accredited by NEASC. NEASC standards are also used as the criteria by the Board of Higher Education when evaluating applications from NEASC accredited independent institutions seeking new licensing authority in the Commonwealth. As such the Commission's standards provide a consistent foundation and measure for evaluation.

Where appropriate, the comments of individual Committee members were informed by the standards of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS), especially in regard to identifying good practices. In the absence of professional accreditation in the field of criminal justice, these standards provide a complement to the more generic regional accreditation standards. It was made clear to the Review Committee, however, that this was not an ACJS review.

III. Observations and Preliminary Findings

Brief History of Criminal Justice as a Field of Study in the United States²

In order to provide a context for the observations and recommendations that follow, it is important to address the growth and development of the field of criminal justice over the past three decades. Across the United States during the last quarter century, criminal justice academic programs have been transformed from "police science" programs to multidisciplinary criminal justice degree programs that emphasize empirical research, development and testing of theory, and the examination of policy-relevant questions across the criminal justice system and at the intersection of criminal justice and other social institutions.

The expansion of criminal justice as an academic field can be attributed to the 1967 report of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice (the Johnson Crime Commission). A predominant theme of the Commission's reports was that the quality and effectiveness of American criminal justice would be decisively improved by upgrading the educational credentials of its practitioners. In 1968, the Commission's recommendations were underwritten with Congress' authorization of the Law Enforcement Assistance Act (LEAA). Congress created a program that contained elements of the G.I. Bill and the ROTC program; LEAA made federal funds available to law enforcement, judicial and correctional personnel to return to school, and to assist college students preparing for careers in the criminal justice system. In response to student demand and the influx of Federal funding, colleges and universities established degree programs called police science, criminology, criminal science, and many others. Enrollments skyrocketed through the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s. Several insightful summaries of the development of criminal justice higher education are available (see, for example, Ward and Webb, *The Quest for Quality*, 1984).

Prior to 1967, academic departments focusing on crime and justice concerns were primarily "police science" programs. They were often housed in academic units outside of the mainstream structure of the college or university (e.g., in continuing education divisions, or in community service divisions). Others were located within more traditional academic departments such as sociology or political science. In the rush to add criminal justice in the years following the President's Commission report, colleges and universities located programs in colleges of education, business, or wherever student credit hours were needed to bolster sagging enrollment.

Staffing the new criminal justice programs was complicated. There were few, if any, prospective faculty in 1968 that held advanced degrees in criminology or related disciplines. Colleges and universities took several approaches to staffing their rapidly growing criminal justice programs in the late 1960s and early 1970s. These included hiring practitioners such as senior police officials, judges, and prosecutors as adjunct faculty, and hiring faculty with degrees in cognate disciplines to teach criminal justice courses.

Criminal Justice education has grown and evolved significantly from these early developments, however, into a credible liberal arts field integrating an applied science with a theoretical foundation

² Portions of this section are drawn from: Timothy J. Flanagan, Liberal Education and the Criminal Justice Major. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*, 11(1): 1-15, Spring, 2000.

and a problem solving orientation. Increasingly, it has evolved out of more traditional academic departments such as psychology and sociology into a department of its own. The number of faculty with terminal degrees in criminal justice has increased substantially, as well, and their scholarship, research and publications enrich and broaden the body of knowledge of the field and the quality of its discipline.

Observations on the Review Process

The following observations provide an important context for understanding the findings and recommendations that follow. This phase of the review process was a "paper review." The Charge from the Board intended that the reviewers would identify those programs where further on-site review may be warranted, and that those institutions would be asked to undertake on-site reviews in the coming year.

Site visits are considered a standard feature of academic program reviews. Without them, data cannot be independently verified and incomplete data cannot be remedied. Most importantly, such visits permit "triangulation," or testing of conclusions through multiple data sources, via multiple interviews with various stakeholders and constituents of the program.

The Review Committee noted wide variation in the quality and completeness of the materials submitted by the colleges and universities. Important areas where documentation was often inadequate included budget information, assessment evidence, descriptive information on students enrolled in the program, follow up data on program graduates, and information that compared the criminal justice program to the institution as a whole. Although the need for additional material is not unusual in program review, reviewers usually have the opportunity to seek additional documentation if the review includes an on-site visit.

In addition, the Committee is well aware that it did not have access to the complete picture of criminal justice higher education programs whose graduates are eligible for Police Career Incentive Pay benefits. Although all Massachusetts public institutions with criminal justice programs participated in the review, almost one-fourth (five out of nineteen) of independent colleges or universities in the Commonwealth whose graduates are eligible under the PCIPP did not. Over half (seven out of thirteen) of out-of-state institutions on the PCIPP list did not respond.

The limitations of a paper review, the variation in the quantity and quality of materials submitted, and the absence of any information from 12 institutions with criminal justice programs, hampered reviewers from confidently arriving at conclusions about the quality and effectiveness of criminal justice education in the Commonwealth and the impact of the Police Career Incentive Pay Program on criminal justice programs. These limitations strongly suggest the need for additional review and analysis prior to drawing final conclusions. This is particularly important given the potential educational, political and economic implications of the findings of this report to the institutions and to the Commonwealth. The Committee asks that its findings be considered as preliminary and its recommendations understood in the context of the perceived limitations of the review format.

Preliminary Findings

As stated in Section I of this report, the Review Committee was asked in its charge to respond to three questions. The Committee presents the following preliminary findings in response to each of those questions.

Question I - What is the quality and effectiveness of criminal justice programs offered by both public and independent institutions in Massachusetts, as well as those programs in neighboring states that offer programs under the Police Career Incentive Pay Program?

The Review Committee was impressed to find the large number and range of criminal justice programs at all degree levels available to the citizens of the Commonwealth. With programs available at thirty-six public and independent institutions located throughout the state as well as at numerous institutions in bordering states, students interested in studying criminal justice will find geographically accessible programs at all degree levels. This array of opportunity provides access to working adults who are part-time students as well students that are able to pursue full-time study.

The Committee recognizes and appreciates the diversity of the 43 collegiate institutions that were involved in this review. As much as possible, comments on quality and effectiveness were made in the context of what reviewers understood to be the mission of an institution and the goals and objectives of its criminal justice program.

Based on the materials submitted by participating institutions, the Committee found wide variation in the quality of criminal justice degree programs at all levels. The Committee reviewed programs at each level that appeared to be thoughtfully designed, appropriately staffed and supported, and delivered in accordance with good practices in criminal justice education. These programs often were newly designed or revised, had been recently evaluated by external reviewers, and/or had been approved by the Board of Higher Education within the past year. A few such programs exist in both the independent and public sectors and at each degree level.

At the same time, the Committee found a small number of programs which, based on the evidence provided by the institution, appeared to present serious concerns about various aspects of quality. Several appear not to have kept up with changes and growing sophistication in the field and new skills and knowledge required to meet current needs. Instead, they feature a dated and narrow perspective on the field. Such programs may diminish the standing of criminal justice higher education in the minds of the public.

The Committee believes that healthy criminal justice programs are dynamic rather than static, and regularly revise and update their curricula in response to new research findings, theoretical developments in the field, and criminal justice policy directions at the state, regional, national and international levels. The Committee anticipates that many criminal justice programs will seek to broaden their focus to include private security and terrorism-related issues, in light of the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001 and the concomitant emphasis on security concerns.

The Committee noted examples of innovative approaches that reflect the growing technical sophistication and modernization of the field of criminal justice. Salem State College, for example, offers a Master of Science in Geo-Information Science with a new concentration in Criminal Justice.

The College is also developing a Masters in Criminal Justice with concentrations in Forensics and Geo-Information Science for approval within two years. Norwich University offers courses in cyber crime and computer forensics and is offering a new minor in Information Assurance beginning in fall, 01.

In several institutions, reviewers encountered evidence of widely differing program administration, faculty staffing and student body composition between a college's 'day' and 'evening' programs. In some institutions, day and evening programs report to different administrative units within the college. This arrangement raised concerns about program accountability, policies governing faculty hiring, sharing of data about students and program outcomes, consistency in provision of student services, and other program administration matters. A few programs offered through continuing education may diminish the standing of all criminal justice higher education in the minds of the public because of the lack of full-time faculty holding the Ph.D. in criminal justice, a less focused curriculum, and an excessive reliance on narrowly trained, part-time faculty. There were examples of institutions, however, such as Middlesex, Greenfield, Massasoit and Mount Wachusett community colleges, Roger Williams University and Westfield State College that showed a commitment to uniformity in the curriculum offered in its day and evening programs and to common standards and accountability procedures across sites.

MISSION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

- Departmental or degree-specific missions are important for articulating and measuring student outcomes, and thereby assessing program effectiveness. Although several programs provided mission statements, many do not have specific missions apart from the general college mission. Some programs lacked correspondence between stated mission/goals and the curriculum. For example, a stated emphasis on communications skills or writing skills was not reflected in the criminal justice curriculum through course requirements or other means.
- NEASC standards state that all programs shall specify degree objectives including the knowledge, intellectual skills, and methods of inquiry to be acquired. Hesser College is one example of an associate degree program that had very clearly stated educational/behavioral objectives with measurable outcomes. Bridgewater State, Curry College, Endicott College, Norwich University, University of Massachusetts Lowell, and Westfield State presented particularly well-articulated program goals and objectives. Many programs, however, were lacking statements of goals and objectives. When found to exist, these were often not measurable and frequently data or information had not been collected to assess the extent to which stated goals or objectives were reached.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND CURRICULUM

- At all three degree levels, the Committee found coherent and well-designed programs characterized by appropriate breadth, depth, continuity, and progression of learning. These programs provided systematic coverage of core areas of the field and related cognate areas, complemented by a range of electives to meet student's intellectual and career interests. The associate degree program at Greenfield Community College, the newly approved bachelor degree program at Endicott College, and the M.S. in Criminal Justice at Fitchburg State College are excellent examples.

- The Committee noted programs at all degree levels, however, that did not clearly identify prerequisites for various courses, leaving the impression that courses could be taken in any particular order. Several course syllabi were included that had no writing assignments or requirements. There is concern that many programs lacked math or statistics requirements, despite the importance of these skills for those who must be intelligent consumers and providers of statistical information.
- Several associate degree programs appeared to require too many courses in criminal justice and too many required courses in the major, leaving insufficient room for general education and liberal arts exposure, or flexibility in course selection within the major. In some associate degree programs, criminal justice courses constitute half of the graduation requirements, causing problems with transfer of courses to bachelor's degree programs. The large numbers of criminal justice courses in some associate degree programs, many taught by adjunct instructors, appeared to result in an overlap of content. The Committee found that different courses were found to have similar reading lists and topics. In contrast, several bachelor level programs appeared to offer minimal number of courses in criminal justice and to provide so much flexibility and choice that a student could potentially graduate without a clear understanding of the core areas of the field and their interrelationships.
- Several institutions that had traditionally offered programs only at the associate degree level have expanded programs to the bachelor degree level without making corresponding changes in staffing, resources, or mission statements. In such programs, there appeared to be a heavy reliance on part-time faculty and a large number of faculty with no terminal degree. These programs tended to provide less support or expectations of faculty research or other areas of faculty development, and offer a curriculum that often did not recognize the changing nature of the field. These factors are particularly problematic in baccalaureate and graduate programs. It is worth noting that newer programs and those that did not begin as associate degree programs appear to be less troubled in these areas.
- There is wide variation in the structure of the curriculum and requirements of graduate programs in criminal justice reviewed by the Committee. Although there are models of strong graduate programs, the Committee found that graduate programs often had no core foundation upon which electives are built, supplemented graduate work with undergraduate courses, included no capstone requirements, lacked depth in terms of readings, assignments required, and written work, and generally did not have the level of depth one would expect commensurate with graduate study.
- The availability of meaningful, relevant, internship opportunities that are related to educational objectives can enrich the learning experience for students. University of Massachusetts Boston and Roger Williams University have particularly well designed internships with a progression of expectations and prerequisites. Castleton State College described a unique opportunity for "field experience" where students visited a number of agencies for short periods, analogous to a clinical rotation. When internships were included in the curriculum, however, many programs were not specific in stating precisely what was to occur during the internship experience.

- Internships at the community college level have to be carefully designed and monitored so that they do not become simply observer programs. Many agencies believe that lower division students may lack the theory and maturity of the upper-division student and are cautious about giving a lower division student too much responsibility. An internship is a valid elective at the associate degree level, however, and should be encouraged. The internship program at North Shore Community College includes a separate syllabus and handbook, suggesting a systematic approach to the internship experience. Roxbury Community College's program, though relatively new, appears to have a strong internship program with on-site visitation of the site by a faculty member and class meetings during the internship to help the student extract value from their experience, solve problems, and relate the experience to coursework. Dean College creatively combines experiential learning with academic requirements by offering a one-unit internship attached to a course.

PROGRAM RESOURCES AND FACULTY

- There were several institutions that provided positive indicators of faculty qualifications, productivity, scholarship, and service in their criminal justice programs. The Committee took special note of associate level programs at Middlesex, Mount Wachusett and Cape Cod Community Colleges and at the bachelor and/or master's levels at the University of Massachusetts Boston and Lowell, Stonehill College, Roger Williams University, Norwich University, Fitchburg State, Endicott College, and Castleton State College.
- Many of the criminal justice degree programs reviewed appear to be under-resourced, in terms of faculty, faculty-student ratio, and other measures of institutional investment. At several institutions criminal justice programs are some of the largest programs yet do not appear to be proportionately funded. Program resources in criminal justice education need to correspond more closely with program size.
- One of the most visible effects of insufficient resources is that instruction in many programs is delivered predominantly by part-time instructors. The Committee understands and values the important role that practitioners can play in higher education. (Several members of the Committee have or currently both teach and work in the criminal justice field.) While the professional experience of part-time and adjunct faculty can enrich the curriculum and the learning experience of students, institutions need to avoid undue dependence on part-time and adjunct faculty. Institutions must ensure that there are adequate numbers of individuals whose time commitment to the program is sufficient to provide effective teaching, advising, and scholarly activity, as well as participate in curriculum development. Students are often the ones to suffer when there are too few full-time faculty to advise them and to provide important interaction outside of the classroom. A large body of research shows that student-faculty interaction is related to retention, and to measures of academic success.
- Heavy dependence on adjunct and part-time faculty appears to occur most often, although not exclusively, when programs are offered at off-campus sites. There are positive examples of colleges, however, such as Westfield State, that have committed the resources to using primarily full-time faculty to teach in their off-campus programs.

- In many of the programs examined, little evidence was found of a commitment, goal or plan to recruit the most qualified faculty to develop and teach criminal justice curricula. Lack of diversity, in terms of gender, race, and ethnicity, is another characteristic of many of the faculties reviewed.
- Many programs at all levels (associate, baccalaureate, and master's) appear to be heavily staffed by local hires of available talent, and program alumni, many who, from the qualifications provided to the Committee, may lack the depth of academic background needed to undertake the transformation of the field. Heavy reliance on graduates from one's own program may limit diversity of academic expertise. The availability of professional development funds for adjunct faculty at Norwich University is very positive and reflects an institutional commitment to excellence in teaching at all ranks.
- A small number of doctorally qualified criminal justice faculty were found in Massachusetts criminal justice programs. The combination of a limited number of faculty with doctorates in criminal justice and the large number of part-time instructors may hinder the evolution of program curricula to meet the needs of the field. Several Massachusetts programs reported that it was difficult to compete for faculty due to salary constraints and resources as well as the cost of living in the Boston area.
- The small number of criminal justice Ph.D.'s and full-time faculty is particularly troubling when the programs are at the graduate level. The usual standard for admission to graduate faculty is the Ph.D. NEASC standards specifically state that institutions offering graduate degrees should have an adequate staff of full-time faculty in areas appropriate to the degree offered. From the materials provided by the institutions, the master's degree programs at Western New England College and Anna Maria College depended extensively on part-time/adjunct faculty and faculty who are graduates of their own programs.

PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

- Assessment of actual student learning in criminal justice programs was rarely evidenced. This dearth of evidence of assessment of student learning is at variance with the standards and policies enunciated by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, (and the Standards of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences). In the materials submitted by the academic criminal justice programs, we found little evidence of specific program goals and objectives, sketchy articulation of student learning outcomes, and virtually no evidence of efforts to measure student learning in relation to *a priori* established learning outcomes. Few programs appear to regularly conduct surveys of graduates to assess career paths and program effectiveness. In the absence of such assessment activity, we found little if any evidence of systematic program development, revision, testing, and revision. In contrast, most of the newly approved programs, such as at Bridgewater, Endicott, Fitchburg, and Roxbury Community College had well-conceived plans for the assessment of student learning. Fitchburg State College has a six-step assessment method to assess student and program progress in its M.S. in Criminal Justice program. Other institutions suggest that systematic assessment of student learning has recently become an institutional priority.

- There was limited evidence of systematic program review. Several institutions and programs, however, appear to conduct reviews on a regular basis and a few were able to demonstrate how the results of the reviews had been used to improve program quality. Among these were Middlesex Community College that undertook an external review of its criminal justice program in 1996 and an internal review in 1999; evidence was provided in the material submitted to show how results from these reviews had led to program revision and improvement. Westfield State provided evidence that it has made curricular changes as a result of its program review process. UMass Boston's University Academic Assessment and Development Program requires that programs undergo regular internal and external review.

ENROLLMENT AND ARTICULATION

- The articulation between associate and baccalaureate programs in criminal justice is vital if students are to be encouraged to continue their study after the associate degree level. There was little indication that faculty from two and four-year institutions are in communication with one another to determine how best to prepare students at two-year institutions who are considering transferring to four-year programs and to clarify academic expectations. The extent to which students are effectively advised about which courses will transfer to four-year institutions and which ones will not was not always clear. Although the Review Committee was apprised of the Transfer Compact and the Joint Admissions Programs in the public sector, there was surprisingly little indication of articulation between criminal justice associate and bachelor degree programs in Massachusetts. The University of Massachusetts Boston was one of a few notable exceptions. It promoted its commitment to transfer articulation with both public and independent two-year institutions. Dean College and Hesser College, both independent institutions, indicated clear articulation paths with many four-year institutions. Fisher College involves faculty from four-year institutions in an advisory capacity.
- A wide range of practices exist among the institutions reviewed in the awarding of credits in the discipline for Police Academy Training as well as credits for military training and life experience. Many institutions allow far too much credit for non-academic experiences, resulting in the awarding of degrees after taking very few academic courses at the institution. These practices conflict with best practice in criminal justice education.

Question II: Are State Workforce Needs and Standards Being Met?

Workforce analyses in criminal justice are complicated by the fact that few entry-level positions in the field require a college degree. The Review Committee, however, is aware that criminal justice degree-holders enter many different fields and occupations, and that a high quality, liberal arts-based undergraduate degree in criminal justice prepares recipients for a wide range of careers. Other than the general data by the Board, the Committee found little evidence that programs were undertaking analyses of employment opportunities and needs and many reports included no evidence that graduates were successful in attaining employment.

A Summary of Selected Indicators was provided to the committee displaying both workforce and academic data. This background information was developed with assistance from the Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training (DET) and the Board's Institutional Research and

Technical staff. Information gleaned with the assistance from the latter group included such sources as HEIRS and IPEDS. The annual statistical publication, *Facts*, a special issue of *Connections*, published by the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) was also used to obtain information regarding the independent institutions.

Data from the Department of Employment and Training projected a 24% increase of new jobs in protective service occupations during the decade 1998-2008. The average growth rate for all new jobs in Massachusetts for the same period is only 10.1%. Thus protective services is projected to be a high growth field. The total new jobs in protective services occupations projected for the Commonwealth is 5,730 in addition to 6,010 replacement openings for a total of 11,740 job openings in the field through 2008.

The number of degrees awarded in the Commonwealth in criminal justice is relatively commensurate with the projected number of job openings projected for the State. During the half decade 1995-2000, 11,323 Criminal Justice degrees were awarded in Massachusetts. Bachelor degrees represented 47% of the total, Associate degrees 29% and Master's degrees 23%. Public institutions awarded 77% of all Associate degrees. Independent institutions awarded 62% and 89% of all bachelor and master's degrees respectively. In fact, independent institutions awarded 57% of all criminal justice degrees. This profile differs from that of most States throughout the country and displays the influence of independent institutions in the Commonwealth.

Although the Committee had only limited time to become familiar with the data, several notable trends became clear.

- Associate degrees experienced a 25% decline in 1999-2000 when compared to 1995-1996
- During this same period, Bachelor and Masters degrees experienced increases of 35% and 112% respectively.
- Growth in the awards of master's degrees in criminal justice in 1999-2000 vs. 1995-1996 was 9.5 times greater than the growth rate in awards of all masters' degrees in the Commonwealth.
- At the same time, the Commonwealth is not producing the Ph.D.s in criminal justice that would bring contemporary scholarship and knowledge about the academic field to the existing undergraduate and Master's level programs.

The Committee found that many criminal justice programs, however, have not kept up with changes and growing sophistication in the field and the new skills and knowledge required to meet current needs. As indicated earlier, many of these programs featured a dated and narrow perspective on the field. The development and use of post-graduate surveys will help institutions to understand the careers their students are entering as well as to understand trends in the field of criminal justice. At Northern Essex Community College, for example, the program acts as a clearinghouse for job opportunities and faculty help students to develop employment portfolios.

As the needs of the criminal justice field change, skills requirements are much more sophisticated than they were 25 years ago. Agencies now require personnel who can administer large government budgets, write and administer grants, conduct forensic science investigations, practice forensic

psychology, perform crime mapping and crime analysis, investigate computer crime, and conduct sophisticated statistical analyses. Degree programs must also evolve to reflect these changes. It was noted that institutions receiving new program approvals for criminal justice programs such as Bridgewater State College (new B.S. and M.S. in Criminal Justice were approved in 2001) did a particularly good job of documenting regional needs indicating their awareness of current industry needs and standards. Several institutions conduct employment outlook surveys, and use advisory boards and program alumni to develop information on employment opportunities and to keep curriculum current. Mount Wachusett Community College conducts surveys of employer needs and uses the results to make changes in the curriculum. The program's specializations in corrections and law enforcement reflect the fact that three state and one federal prison are within close proximity to the campus.

The information provided on degree production and workforce needs suggests that criminal justice programs in Massachusetts may be producing more baccalaureate and masters degrees than needed for direct entry into the field. However, it is important to keep in mind that Criminal Justice has evolved into a legitimate liberal arts discipline and as such should not be regarded as a vocational program serving only the protective services occupations.

Question III: What is the current impact of the Police Career Incentive Program on the quality and delivery of criminal justice programs in Massachusetts and surrounding states?

The Police Career Incentive Pay Program, commonly referred to as the Quinn Bill³, is a statute passed by the Massachusetts legislature in 1970. The Quinn Bill establishes an enviable economic incentive for law enforcement practitioners to pursue and complete academic degrees in law enforcement. In its current version, the Quinn Bill provides for "a base salary increase of ten percent upon attaining an associate's degree in law enforcement or sixty points earned to a baccalaureate degree in law enforcement, a twenty percent increase upon attaining a baccalaureate degree in law enforcement, and a twenty-five percent increase upon attaining a master's degree in law enforcement or for a degree in law." This salary enhancement is available to personnel in law enforcement agencies in 232 participating cities and towns, and to members of the Massachusetts State Police. The Commonwealth pays one-half of the annual incentive payment for personnel of city and town law enforcement agencies, and 100 percent of the incentive payment for members of the State Police. The incentive payment is in addition to the officer's base salary, increases as base salary increases, and applies for the balance of the officer's working career. According to an article published in the electronic version of the *Worcester Star Telegram* on March 25, 2001, there are 8,057 police officers in Massachusetts who receive Quinn Bill benefits, and the annual cost to Massachusetts taxpayers of these salary enhancements is \$76 million in fiscal year 2001. The article suggests that many independent colleges and universities in the Commonwealth have developed outsized criminal justice degree programs in direct response to the Quinn Bill.

It would appear that the Board of Higher Education, to its credit, has recognized the evolution of the field of law enforcement to embrace a much broader, contemporary discipline now called criminal justice. The Board has chosen to interpret degrees in criminal justice as the equivalent of a degree in law enforcement to qualify for Quinn Bill incentives under the statute.

³ Please see Appendix A for the text of the statute.

- If one purpose of the Quinn Bill was to encourage law enforcement practitioners to pursue higher education, the demand for criminal justice higher education in the Commonwealth provides indirect evidence of the Quinn Bill's impact. However, criminal justice higher education program enrollments have grown throughout the United States during the past 25 years. More importantly, the Committee did not review any direct evidence indicating that the criminal justice workforce in Massachusetts is more educated than their colleagues in other states, or that if such differences existed, that they would be attributable to the Quinn Bill salary incentive program.
- Similarly, there is no direct evidence that the Quinn Bill has improved the quality of criminal justice education in Massachusetts. In fact, there is circumstantial evidence that the enrollment demand created by the Quinn Bill's economic incentives may be responsible, at least in part, for making criminal justice an academic "cash cow" for some institutions, and for concomitant concerns about program quality. Specific recommendations to the Board pertaining to the Police Career Incentive Program are included in Section IV.

IV. Recommendations to the Board of Higher Education

The Review Committee is aware of the potential for its observations, findings, and recommendations to serve as a source of influence in policy development, especially in relation to the administration of the Police Career Incentive Pay Program. The Committee continues to be concerned about its total reliance on printed documents, often found to be insufficient or incomplete, and the lack of participation in the review of 22% of the institutions whose graduates are eligible for Police Career Incentive Pay benefits under the Quinn Bill. We believe that it is premature to arrive at conclusions about the condition of criminal justice education at individual institutions and in the Commonwealth as a whole, or the impact of the Police Career Incentive Program, based solely on the information that has been provided. The recommendations that follow, therefore, focus on the next steps that the Committee believes should be taken.

- The Review Committee recommends that the Commonwealth set high expectations for criminal justice degree programs. A commitment to higher standards is needed. A commitment to excellence is required.
- In the Committee's view, the quality of the academic program should be a precondition for approving criminal justice programs for eligibility under the Police Career Incentive Pay Program. Academic program quality considerations are currently absent from the PCIPP statute.
- The Board of Higher Education's role regarding administration of the Police Career Incentive Pay Program is limited and weak. The Board of Higher Education should have control over new Criminal Justice programs for all institutions seeking Quinn Bill program approval to insure minimum levels of quality. As the designated higher education coordinating authority for the Commonwealth, the Board of Higher Education should be given authority to monitor the quality of academic programs eligible under the PCIPP statute. This authority should include the suspension or termination of programs that do not meet acceptable standards of academic quality.
- The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth empanel a well-qualified and prestigious Criminal Justice Advisory Board to the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education. The Advisory Board would assist the Board of Higher Education in developing a quality assurance program to guide policy development and decision-making related to the Quinn Bill and its administration.
- The Board of Higher Education should establish procedures to utilize regional and national ACJS entities in an advisory capacity to the Board in its review of requests for new criminal justice degree programs.
- The Board of Higher Education should encourage college and university presidents and provosts to review their criminal justice programs on a regular basis and set high expectations, insisting on verifiable indicia of program quality. The *ACJS Minimum Standards* for higher education programs in criminal justice are one good starting point for the development of modern, rigorous, high quality academic criminal justice programs.

- The Board of Higher Education should develop partnerships (with NEASC, ACJS, and other professional entities in criminal justice and higher education) to encourage the development of high quality criminal justice programs. Such partnerships will also be helpful to the Board in determining the eligibility of criminal justice degrees under the guidelines of the Quinn Bill statute when such questions arise.
- In light of the Board's charge to the Committee, we recommend that the Chancellor, working with Presidents and Provosts, develop guidelines to implement a statewide, on-site program review of all criminal justice programs that have not had external reviews in the past five years and whose graduates are eligible for Police Career Incentive Pay. Given the perceptions of questionable program quality at some institutions and the impressions of the Review Committee that those perceptions are correct, on-campus visits are critical, especially for programs with large off-campus components. Campuses have prepared and submitted self-study materials that have been reviewed by a panel of criminal justice professionals. The professionals have identified where information was missing or evidence not provided. Using those materials and initial evaluations, institutions should bring outside reviewers to campus to assess their programs first hand and make recommendations for improvement. The Board could play an important role in identifying best practices discovered through this review process, and disseminating information about these practices to criminal justice programs across the Commonwealth and New England. Institutions whose graduates are eligible for benefits under the Quinn Bill and that declined to be involved in the paper review should be encouraged to participate.

CONCLUSION

The review of 58 criminal justice programs from 43 institutions was a very ambitious undertaking. The Committee knows of no other state that has undertaken a review of this magnitude in recent years. The Board of Higher Education and the participating institutions are to be commended for their commitment to improving the quality of criminal justice education on their individual campuses and in the Commonwealth as a whole.

At no time in our history as a country has it been more important to have criminal justice professionals, who can think critically, communicate effectively, and act ethically, as they apply the knowledge of the field to real life situations. Students in these programs, the field of criminal justice, the citizens of the Commonwealth and of the country as a whole will be the beneficiaries of your efforts.

Although our work with the Commonwealth concludes with this report, we look forward to working with you in any way that will be helpful as you consider our findings and recommendations.

APPENDIX A: TEXT OF THE QUINN BILL

Chapter 41: Section 108L. Police career incentive pay program; salary increases; reimbursement of cities or towns.

Section 108L. There is hereby established a career incentive pay program offering base salary increases to regular full-time members of the various city and town police departments, uniformed members of the department of state police appointed under said section ten, state police detectives appointed under section ten of said chapter twenty-two C, as a reward for furthering their education in the field of policework.

Police career incentive base salary increases shall be predicated on the accumulation of points earned in the following manner: one point for each semester hour credit earned toward a baccalaureate or an associate degree; sixty points for an associate degree; one hundred and twenty points for a baccalaureate degree; and one hundred and fifty points for a degree of master or for a degree in law; provided, that said credits or degrees were earned in courses leading towards a degree in law enforcement or any course or degree program approved by the board of higher education prior to July 1st, 1976. All semester credits and degrees shall be earned in an educational institution accredited by the New England Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools or by the board of higher education, and shall be credited for the purpose of determining points under this section, notwithstanding the date of appointment of an individual to a position described in the first paragraph of this section.

The board of higher education is hereby authorized and directed to establish and maintain a list of approved courses leading to a degree in law enforcement.

Base salary increases authorized by this section shall be granted in the following manner: a three per cent increase for ten points so accumulated, a six per cent increase for twenty-five points, a ten per cent increase for forty points, a fifteen per cent increase for sixty points, a twenty per cent increase for one hundred and twenty points, and a thirty per cent increase for one hundred and fifty points so accumulated.

Any city or town which accepts the provisions of this section and provides career incentive salary increases for police officers shall be reimbursed by the commonwealth for one half the cost of such payments upon certification by the board of higher education. The board of higher education shall certify the amount of such reimbursement to be paid to such city or town from information filed on or before September first of each year with said board, on a form furnished by it, the chief of police, or one of similar rank, of the city or town police department. The board of higher education shall also certify the amount of the career incentive salary increases to be allocated to the members of the department of state police appointed under section ten of chapter twenty-two C from information filed with said board on or before September first of each year by the colonel of state police. Said information shall be filed on a form to be furnished by the board of higher education.

Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, no such regular full-time police officer shall be entitled to such pay increase for points earned after September 1st, 1976; provided, however, that such police officer who is certified as of September 1st, 1976 in the police career incentive program

leading to a degree in law enforcement shall only be granted further base salary increases of fifteen per cent for an associate's degree in law enforcement, or sixty points earned toward a baccalaureate degree in law enforcement, a twenty per cent increase for a baccalaureate degree in law enforcement, a thirty per cent increase for a master's degree in law enforcement or for a degree in law; or any police officer enrolled in any course or degree program approved by the board of higher education, prior to July 1st, 1976, shall only be granted further base salary increases of fifteen per cent for an associate's degree or sixty points earned toward a baccalaureate degree, a twenty per cent increase for a baccalaureate degree, and a thirty per cent increase for a master's degree or for a degree in law, provided further, that such percentage increase shall in total, including any previously earned increase, not exceed fifteen per cent for an associate's degree or sixty points earned toward a baccalaureate degree, twenty per cent for a baccalaureate degree, and thirty per cent for a master's degree or for a degree in law, provided further, that any regular full-time police officer commencing such incentive pay program after September 1st, 1976 shall be granted a base salary increase of ten per cent upon attaining an associate's degree in law enforcement or sixty points earned to a baccalaureate degree in law enforcement, a twenty per cent increase upon attaining a baccalaureate degree in law enforcement, and a twenty-five per cent increase upon attaining a master's degree in law enforcement or for a degree in law.

APPENDIX B: POLICE CAREER INCENTIVE PAY PROGRAM APPROVED PROGRAMS

Massachusetts Colleges Granting Associate Degrees in Criminal Justice or Law Enforcement

Aquinas College - (Closed 1999)
Assumption College **
Bay Path College
Becker College
Berkshire Community College
Bristol Community College
Bunker Hill Community College
Cape Cod Community College
Dean College
Fisher College
Greenfield Community College
Holyoke Community College
Massachusetts Bay Community College
Massasoit Community College
Middlesex Community College
Mount Ida College
Mount Wachusett Community College
Newbury College
North Shore Community College
Northeastern University *, **
Northern Essex Community College
Quincy College *, **
Quinsigamond Community College
Roxbury Community College
Springfield Technical Community College
Stonehill College

Massachusetts Colleges Granting Bachelors Degrees in Criminal Justice or Law Enforcement

American International College *
Anna Maria College
Assumption College
Bay Path
Becker College
Bridgewater State College
Curry College
Endicott College
Lasell College **
Mount Ida College

Newbury College
Northeastern University *, **
Salem State College
Springfield College
Stonehill College
Suffolk University *
University of Massachusetts at Amherst
University of Massachusetts at Boston
University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth
University of Massachusetts at Lowell
Western New England College
Westfield State College

Massachusetts Colleges Granting Masters Degrees in Criminal Justice or Law Enforcement

American International College
Anna Maria College
Boston University *, **
Clark University *, **
Curry College
Fitchburg State College
Northeastern University *, **
Suffolk University *
University of Massachusetts at Lowell
Western New England College
Westfield State College

New England Colleges Granting Associate Degrees in Criminal Justice or Law Enforcement

Bryant College (no longer offering degrees in law enforcement) *
Castleton State College *
Hesser College *
Roger Williams University *
Salve Regina College *, **
Southern Vermont College *
Saint Anselms College *, **

New England Colleges Granting Bachelors Degrees in Criminal Justice or Law Enforcement

Bryant College (no longer offering degrees in law enforcement) *
Franklin Pierce College *, **
Hesser College *
Johnson and Wales University *, **
Norwich University *
Roger Williams University *
Sacred Heart College *, **
Salve Regina College *, **

Saint Anselms College *, **
Saint Joseph's College *, **
University of New Haven *, **

New England Colleges Granting Masters Degrees in Criminal Justice or Law Enforcement

Roger Williams University *

* Indicates institutions that do not fall under the purview of the Board of Higher Education
** Institution declined to participate in the Board of Higher Education review

